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## Massachusetts Treasurer Deb Goldberg warns of unclaimed property scam



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BOSTON — The Massachusetts Treasurer's Office will never ask people to pay money up front to recover unclaimed property.

But Bay State residents are getting illegitimate letters touting "unclaimed property winnings" and demanding payments. And these letters are made to look like they are coming from the Treasurers Office, according to a warning from Massachusetts Treasurer Deb Goldberg

Goldberg said in a news release:

"It has come to our attention that fraudulent letters using our address and likeness have been sent to residents across the state. Our goal is to ensure that no Massachusetts citizen is taken advantage of as part of this scam."

Official unclaimed property notices will never direct owners to pay money, whether for processing fees, tax payments or otherwise, Goldberg said.

The official Massachusetts Treasury website for unclaimed property – <http://www.findmassmoney.com/> – is free of charge to search and claim.

There are legitimate letters sent on the subject. The Office of the State Treasurer and Massachusetts legislators utilize the mail to inform owners of unclaimed property, Goldberg said.

How to tell a real letter:

- Letters will be mailed from Boston with a return address.
- They will direct owners to an official <http://www.mass.gov/> website.
- They will bear the official seal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts along with the signature of the treasurer.

Unclaimed property includes forgotten savings and checking accounts, uncashed checks, insurance policy proceeds, stocks, dividends and the contents of unattended safe deposit boxes.

Most accounts are considered abandoned and turned over to the state after three years of inactivity.

Last year, the state treasury returned over \$114 million in property to its rightful owners, making Massachusetts the state that returned the most money on a per-capita basis. The treasury currently holds over \$2 billion in unclaimed property that rightfully belongs to Massachusetts residents.

If you have any questions regarding unclaimed property, visit the treasury's official website – <http://www.findmassmoney.com/> – or call 888-344-MASS (6277). You can view an example of a fraudulent letter below, or [on the treasurer's website](#).

[http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2016/04/massachusetts\\_treasurer\\_goldbe.html](http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2016/04/massachusetts_treasurer_goldbe.html)